

Message Text

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E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PINT, PBOR, XF, IS
SUBJ: EZER WEIZMAN'S VIEWS ON ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUES

REF: STATE 52171

1. WE WOULD HOPE THAT OUR VOLUMINOUS REPORTING IN RECENT WEEKS HAS PROVIDED YOU WITH MOST OF THE NECESSARY BASIC MATERIAL ON THIS SUBJECT. I AM SEEING WEIZMAN IN NEXT DAY OR TWO FOR TOUR D'HORIZON BEFORE HE LEAVES FOR U.S., AND WILL GO OVER HIS VIEWS AGAIN AT THAT TIME. WE ALSO HAVE IN FINAL STAGE OF PREPARATION A MAJOR PIECE ON WEIZMAN WHICH WE HOPE WILL BE OF SIGNIFICANT HELP TO YOU IN PREPARING FOR WEIZMAN VISIT. YOU SHOULD HAVE THIS BY FRIDAY MORNING. MEANWHILE, HERE ARE A FEW SUPPLEMENTARY THOUGHTS.

2. WEIZMAN WOULD HIMSELF BE PREPARED TO SEE ALL THE SINAI SETTLEMENTS LIQUIDATED OVER A REASONABLE PERIOD IF THAT WERE NECESSARY FOR PEACE WITH EGYPT. HE MUCH PREFERS IDEA OF SOME EXCHANGE OF TERRITORY, AND PRIVATELY REGRETS PROVISION OF BEGIN PLAN WHICH PROPOSED LEAVING SETTLEMENTS UNDER EGYPTIAN SOVEREIGNTY, BUT LOYALLY DEFENDS IT. (HE ARGUED AGAINST IT IN CABINET AT THE TIME.) RETENTION OF AT LEAST ETZION
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AIRBASE FOR MANY YEARS SEEMS VITAL TO HIM, AND MUCH MORE VITAL THAN THE SETTLEMENTS IN RAFAH. WIDTH OF DEMILITARIZED ZONE IN SINAI AND LIMITATIONS ON EGYPTIAN AIR AND ARMOR DEPLOYMENTS ARE CRITICAL QUESTIONS.

3. SO FAR AS WE KNOW, WEIZMAN HAS NOT BEEN INVOLVED AS YET IN POLICY DELIBERATIONS ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER

242 REQUIRES WITHDRAWAL " ON ALL FRONTS" OR NOT. BUT HE WILL BE ENGAGED IN THIS DISPUTE IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE WITHOUT QUESTION. WHEREVER HE COMES DOWN ON THAT ONE, ESSENTIALLY A QUESTION OF THE DIPLOMATIC RECORD AND ITS MEANING WHICH IS NOT HIS STRONG POINT, HE HAS ALWAYS AND CONTINUES TO BELIEVE STOUTLY IN THE RIGHT OF JEWS TO SETTLE IN THE WEST BANK. AS HE FORTHRIGHTLY TOLD ROY ATHERTON AT DINNER AT MY HOUSE LAST SUNDAY, "YOU ARE WRONG IF YOU THINK WE WILL EVER LEAVE THE WEST BANK." I DON'T KNOW THAT HE INTENDS THAT STATEMENT TO BE TAKEN LITERALLY; IN PART IT IS REFLECTIVE OF HIS CONVICTIONS, BUT ALSO IT IS A HAWKISH PUBLIC COUNTERBALANCE TO HIS DOVISH POSITION ON THE SINAI. HE IS DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT SECURITY ISSUES INVOLVING THE WEST BANK, BUT CONCENTRATES HIS THINKING MORE ON QUESTIONS OF CONVENTIONAL MILITARY DEFENSE AGAINST THREATS FROM THE EAST RATHER THAN ANTI-SUBVERSION AND ANTI-TERRORISTS PROBLEMS. WEIZMAN IS UNCONVINCED THAT ANY NEGOTIABLE DIVISION OF THE WEST BANK IS POSSIBLE. HE SUPPORTS THE BASIC IDEA OF THE BEGIN SELF-RULE PLAN--WHILE AGREEING THAT A MUCH MORE SUBSTANTIAL JORDANIAN DIMENSION WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO BE ADDED TO IT.

4. WEIZMAN CONCENTRATES AT PRESENT HEAVILY ON THE QUESTION OF MAKING PEACE WITH EGYPT. HE AND HIS FAMILY HAVE BEEN STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY THEIR PERSONAL TRIPS
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TO EGYPT AND HE IN PARTICULAR BY HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH GAMASY AND SADAT. HE IS DISCOURAGED AT THE MOMENT ABOUT THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING, ALMOST DESPERATE TO FIND SOME WAY TO AVOID LOSING THE CHANCE OF PEACE WITH EGYPT, AND TURNING OVER IN HIS OWN MIND HOW TO PRECLUDE GOING DOWN WITH BEGIN'S POLITICAL SHIP IF THE BEGIN GOVERNMENT FAILS IN ITS PEACE NEGOTIATIONS OVER THE WEEKS AND MONTHS AHEAD.
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